

1 Samuel 20 - Thursday, June 5th, 2014

- Three weeks ago, in chapter nineteen, we left Saul and his men pursuing David in order to kill him, but God intervenes and stops them.
- The way He does it is most interesting in that He puts unsanctified men into a sanctified state of prophesying to protect David from Saul.
- We pick up the narrative with David seizing the divine opportunity to flee knowing that Saul will stop at nothing and do everything to kill him.

(1) Then David fled from Naioth in Ramah, and went and said to Jonathan, "What have I done? What *is* my iniquity, and what *is* my sin before your father, that he seeks my life?" (2) So Jonathan said to him, "By no means! You shall not die! Indeed, my father will do nothing either great or small without first telling me. And why should my father hide this thing from me? It *is* not *so*!" (3) Then David took an oath again, and said, "Your father certainly knows that I have found favor in your eyes, and he has said, 'Do not let Jonathan know this, lest he be grieved.' But truly, *as* the LORD lives and *as* your soul lives, *there is* but a step between me and death." (4) So Jonathan said to David, "Whatever you yourself desire, I will do *it* for you."

- Couple of thoughts here right out of the shoot, the first of which is that David assumes Saul wants to kill him because of something he did.
- The reason I point this out is that often times, this is our first response when adversity strikes, when in fact, that may not be the real reason.
- If the truth be made known, not only has David done nothing wrong, he's actually done everything right, yet he is still running for dear life.

- Here's where I'm going with this, we do err greatly when we conclude in a trial, that we're out of God's will or have done something wrong.
- Often times, we can be right smack in the middle of the trial of our lives, and yet still be right smack in the middle of God's will for our lives.
- I think of the disciples when Jesus knowingly sent them into the middle of a storm on the Sea of Galilee, yet they were in His will for them.

- The second thought has to do with Jonathan's response to David who is obviously very discouraged. He offers to help in any way he can.
- What's interesting is that Jonathan could have just as easily rebuked David for not having enough faith, or worse yet, side with his father.
- I can't get over the innocent denial on the part of Jonathan when he tells David that he would've surely know if his father wanted to kill him.

- The reason I find this interesting is Jonathan, true to form, demonstrates keen discernment and unflinching loyalty to David over his father.
- I would suggest that he trusts David more than he trusts his own father. However, in that culture even to this day, this is a serious problem.
- This because, the son must remain loyal to his father, which Jonathan does, yet here, he must also be loyal to David who he knows is right.

- Here's the take away before we move on to verse five, I believe that loyalty is the lost jewel amongst God's people, in God's church today.
- Perhaps better said, it's becoming infinitely more difficult to find a Jonathan who will stand with us when it seems everyone is against us.
- We desperately to be a Jonathan, or we need a Jonathan to be an encouragement to us, pray for us, instead of joining the gossip about us.

(5) And David said to Jonathan, "Indeed tomorrow *is* the New Moon, and I should not fail to sit with the king to eat. But let me go, that I may hide in the field until the third *day* at evening. (6) If your father misses me at all, then say, 'David earnestly asked *permission* of me that he might run over to Bethlehem, his city, for *there is* a yearly sacrifice there for all the family.' (7) If he says thus: '*It is well*,' your servant will be safe. But if he is very angry, be sure that evil is determined by him. (8) Therefore you shall deal kindly with your servant, for you have brought your servant into a covenant of the LORD with you. Nevertheless, if there is iniquity in me, kill me yourself, for why should you bring me to your father?" (9) But Jonathan said, "Far be it from you! For if I knew certainly that evil was determined by my father to come upon you, then would I not tell you?" (10) Then David said to Jonathan, "Who will tell me, or what *if* your father answers you roughly?" (11) And Jonathan said to David, "Come, let us go out into the field." So both of them went out into the field.

- I don't know if you caught it or not, but we have a huge problem here. Sadly, David is asking Jonathan to outright lie for him, to his father.
- I mention this because it's probably as good of a time as any to address the issue of lying in the scriptures, lest we think God approves of it.
- I suppose it goes without saying, but lying is sin, and we're prone to lie when we distrust God in our fear, which also happens to be a sin.

- We have a similar situation with Rahab lying to the men of Jericho in order save the lives of the two spies, which we studied in Joshua 2.
- The issue is that it would almost seem as if God were condoning, or at the very least, excusing lying, in certain cases such as these two.
- I would submit that God is in no way doing this, and furthermore, there is never a justifiable, let alone an excusable, lie in any situation.

- Here's why both lies, as with any lie are sin, first as it relates to Rahab, it's important to note that at the time, she was still an unbeliever
- In other words, she hadn't yet come to salvation or the subsequent work of sanctification. She was still a sinner, not to mention a prostitute.
- We do err when we expect un-regenerated unbelievers to behave like regenerated believers. Absent salvation, there is no sanctification.

- Another reason both passages don't condone lying is just because God's Word records the lie, doesn't mean that it's encouraging the lie.
- The narrative gives us an account of what actually happened, however, neither of them needed to lie to be protected from their pursuers.
- Here's the lesson we can learn from this, God doesn't need us to lie in order to protect ourselves, and or even others, from peril or harm.

- One final thought before we move on, I'm of the belief that we're never more like the Devil than when we're deceptive, given over to lying.
- We know from scripture, in the words of Jesus Himself, the Devil is the "Father of Lies." When we lie, we are acting like a child of the Devil.
- You've heard the expression the apple doesn't fall too far from the tree, well, so to is this true for us when we to imitate the Father of Lies.

- The good news is lying, and the father of lying, cannot have the last word in our lives. Neither did it have the final word in the life of Rahab.
- This prostitute and liar was an example of faith in James, a hero of faith in Hebrews, and she's in the lineage of Jesus Christ in Matthew.
- How can this be? It's been said that when God sees us He sees not our sin He sees only His Son. God sees us not as sinners but saints.

That said, I'd be remiss if I didn't mention there are those who do not hold to the belief that David actually lied as evidenced by one commentator who wrote, "It seems probably that David went first to Bethlehem, as he bade Jonathan to tell his father in verse six, and thence returned to the field, when the occasion required; else we must charge him with a downright lie, which ought not to be imagined (without any apparent cause) concerning so good a man."

(12) Then Jonathan said to David: "The LORD God of Israel *is witness!* When I have sounded out my father sometime tomorrow, *or* the third day, and indeed *there is* good toward David, and I do not send to you and tell you, (13) may the LORD do so and much more to Jonathan. But if it pleases my father *to do* you evil, then I will report it to you and send you away, that you may go in safety. And the LORD be with you as He has been with my father. (14) And you shall not only show me the kindness of the LORD while I still live, that I may not die; (15) but you shall not cut off your kindness from my house forever, no, not when the LORD has cut off every one of the enemies of David from the face of the earth." (16) So Jonathan made *a covenant* with the house of David, *saying*, "Let the LORD require *it* at the hand of David's enemies." (17) Now Jonathan again caused David to vow, because he loved him; for he loved him as he loved his own soul.

- This is interesting for a number of reasons not the least of which is Jonathan's insistence that David would vow to only show him kindness.
- It's important to understand in that day, it was common to kill all the descendants of the previous king's house when replaced by another.
- It's for this reason that I find this most interesting, such that, Jonathan knew that David's lineage would replace his as king over all of Israel.

(18) Then Jonathan said to David, "Tomorrow *is* the New Moon; and you will be missed, because your seat will be empty. (19) And *when* you have stayed three days, go down quickly and come to the place where you hid on the day of the deed; and remain by the stone Ezel. (20) Then I will shoot three arrows to the side, as though I shot at a target; (21) and there I will send a lad, *saying*, 'Go, find the arrows.' If I expressly say to the lad, 'Look, the arrows *are* on this side of you; get them and come'—then, as the LORD lives, *there is* safety for you and no harm. (22) But if I say thus to the young man, 'Look, the arrows *are* beyond you'—go your way, for the LORD has sent you away. (23) And as for the matter which you and I have spoken of, indeed the LORD *be* between you and me forever."

- I wonder what David is thinking right about now given his life has the propensity to change forever in three days with just the three arrows.
- You probably caught the typology here with David spending three days in the field in how points to Jesus spending three days in the tomb.
- Be that as it may, I don't think we can underestimate both the enormity and the intensity of that which is about to take place in three days.

(24) Then David hid in the field. And when the New Moon had come, the king sat down to eat the feast. (25) Now the king sat on his seat, as at other times, on a seat by the wall. And Jonathan arose, and Abner sat by Saul's side, but David's place was empty. (26) Nevertheless Saul did not say anything that day, for he thought, "Something has happened to him; he *is* unclean, surely he *is* unclean." (27) And it happened the next day, the second *day* of the month, that David's place was empty. And Saul said to Jonathan his son, "Why has the son of Jesse not come to eat, either yesterday or today?" (28) So Jonathan answered Saul, "David earnestly asked *permission* of me *to go* to Bethlehem. (29) And he said, 'Please let me go, for our family has a sacrifice in the city, and my brother has commanded me *to be there*. And now, if I have found favor in your eyes, please let me get away and see my brothers.' Therefore he has not come to the king's table." (30) Then Saul's anger was aroused against Jonathan, and he said to him, "You son of a perverse, rebellious *woman!* Do I not know that you have chosen the son of Jesse to your own shame and to the shame of your mother's nakedness? (31) For as long as the son of Jesse lives on the earth, you shall not be established, nor your kingdom. Now therefore, send and bring him to me, for he shall surely die."

- I don't know if you noticed it but Saul never calls David by his name. However, even though Jonathan lies, he does call him by his name.
- The reason this is important is that Saul is being deliberately disrespectful and condescending towards both David and his son Jonathan.
- I bring this up because it's textbook behavior on the part of those who are full of self and pride. They tear others down to lift themselves up.

F.B. Meyer - "Speaking of him derisively as 'the son of Jesse,' accentuated his lowly birth, and ignored the relationship that bound him to the royal family."

- I can't even begin to imagine how hurtful this must have been to Jonathan. What's even worse is what we'll see Saul do in the next verses.
- At this point however I believe Jonathan was absolutely devastated in realizing his father's true intentions concerning his loyal friend David.
- If this weren't bad enough, I'm also of the belief that Jonathan now realizes he will likely never see David again, which is in fact how it ends.

(32) And Jonathan answered Saul his father, and said to him, "Why should he be killed? What has he done?" (33) Then Saul cast a spear at him to kill him, by which Jonathan knew that it was determined by his father to kill David. (34) So Jonathan arose from the table in fierce anger, and ate no food the second day of the month, for he was grieved for David, because his father had treated him shamefully. (35) And so it was, in the morning, that Jonathan went out into the field at the time appointed with David, and a little lad *was* with him. (36) Then he said to his lad, "Now run, find the arrows which I shoot." As the lad ran, he shot an arrow beyond him. (37) When the lad had come to the place where the arrow was which Jonathan had shot, Jonathan cried out after the lad and said, "*Is* not the arrow beyond you?" (38) And Jonathan cried out after the lad, "Make haste, hurry, do not delay!" So Jonathan's lad gathered up the arrows and came back to his master. (39) But the lad did not know anything. Only Jonathan and David knew of the matter. (40) Then Jonathan gave his weapons to his lad, and said to him, "Go, carry *them* to the city." (41) As soon as the lad had gone, David arose from *a place* toward the south, fell on his face to the ground, and bowed down three times. And they kissed one another; and they wept together, but David more so. (42) Then Jonathan said to David, "Go in peace, since we have both sworn in the name of the LORD, saying, 'May the LORD be between you and me, and between your descendants and my descendants, forever.'" So he arose and departed, and Jonathan went into the city.

- Is it just me or does Saul always have a spear. Actually, this may be what insecure people do; they're at the ready to throw a spear at you.
- I hate to end a chapter on such a sad note, but I can't help but feel the emotions of the moment as they both depart on their separate ways.
- Be that as it may, I think it's important we understand everything is going perfectly according to God's plan in spite of Saul's wickedness.